

Madison School Board awaits construction decision

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Angela Gartner

AGartner@News-Herald.com

Madison School Board members still have to jump through a few more hoops to build the district's new school buildings.

School board members, at a Tuesday morning meeting, discussed the tight deadline of finally resolving a sewer dispute. The board has to get approval from Lake County commissioners before July 12 or the project could be delayed further.

The new middle school site is slated to be in Madison Township, but Madison Village would provide sewer service, which became an issue and caused the interruption in plans.

Lake County commission-

ers now have a say on whether the school construction project can continue. They gave Madison Schools and Madison Village a memorandum of understanding on Friday to sign before giving approval.

The commissioners, however, are requesting that the school district receive its water supply from the county rather than from the village for the new middle school building, according to school officials.

Madison Village Administrator Alyson Moritz said the understanding is still under review and most likely will be voted on during the July 5 meeting.

School board members received a waiver of objection from the commissioners

in which Madison Schools wouldn't be able to appeal if the county decides to build a sewer line to the middle school property. The school district also would have to pay tap-in fees as well as a share of assessment costs.

The district also has to get approval from the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, a federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for five counties, after receiving the OK from the commissioners. School officials don't anticipate NOACA approval will delay the school building project.

Problems arose during an April meeting when the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency told the district it was not in favor of granting

approval of village permits for the new middle school site on Middle Ridge Road because of noncompliance and capacity issues at the aging sanitary sewer system in Madison Village.

But a short-term maintenance plan for the system was approved by the EPA this month.

The hope is to finally move forward with plans. However, board members were upset they weren't notified about the new understandings or issues involving sewer and water lines before construction plans were drawn.

"I am beyond emotion in this process," Board President Rex Reigert said. "I just want to see a shovel in the ground."